



## **Arlington Poet Laureate Committee**

### **Poet Laureate Committee Meeting**

30 April 2015

8 AM

Town Hall Annex 1st floor Conference Room

Present: Jeff Boudreau, John Burt (secretary), Liza Halley (chair), Jane Howard, Pamela Powell

#### **1. Approval of Minutes from April 21 meeting**

add the following:

- a. That we have a Facebook page - Arlington Poet Laureate Committee - <https://www.facebook.com/arlingtonpoetlaureate> was not noted or discussed. I encourage all to "like", contribute and share with friends.
- b. Under old business add at an earlier meeting Jeff had suggested we have a blog. He is willing to create after discussion and approval. It would be like the one he runs for ACC - see <https://arlingtonculturalcouncil.wordpress.com/>
- c. The dates, times and locations of all of our future meetings should be added.
- d. Add in accordance with open meeting law, future meeting dates, times and locations will be filed by Secretary with Arlington Town Clerk.
- e. Secretary will file approved meetings with Town Manager's office for posting on the Town website, and notices of future meetings also sent to TM office for listing on our web page.

#### **2. Schedule of meetings**

May 11 8 AM second floor conference room

June 1 8 AM second floor conference room

#### **3. Answers to questions of town manager**

- a. Eileen Messina will continue to provide our administrative support
- b. We continue to serve until someone steps down. At that point, the appropriate appointing authority can then designate a new member. That said, if the committee wants to pursue clarification at next year's Town Meeting they are more than welcome to do so.
- c. The town would like guidance from us about what kinds of things the laureate should do. The town does not have clearly defined expectations about it. Question for us: how concrete to we want to be about what the poet should do--  
- specify the number of readings, or not?

**4. Mark-up of application** (see attached). The committee revised and approved the attached application. We will adjust the dates on the timeline if the current dates prove unrealistic.

**5. Discussion of publicity plan**

The deadline for the Arlington Advocate is noon on Mondays. We can post a notice for the 8th. Jeff has expertise with publicity and will handle it with the ACMI, the Patch, Bob Sprague and other avenues.

**Action items:**

1. Draft a warrant article (in July or August or whenever) to cover the administrative questions we have about compensation of the laureate, duration of our committee, terms for our committee, responsibilities and expectations about the poet laureate
2. Specify the start and finish date of the laureate's year in the offer letter. (We don't specify that now because we don't yet know when we will be ready)
3. Prepare for October 15 deadline Arlington cultural council grant
4. Put the language from the warrant as an appendix of the application and include in it a link to that language

## **POET LAUREATE APPLICATION**

### **APPLICATION DEADLINE: May 25, 2015**

The Town of Arlington seeks applications for the 2015-2016 Town Poet Laureate. Beginning May 1, 2015, applications are welcome from individual poets who are seeking the position. A complete application package must be sent to the Arlington Poet Laureate Committee [arlingtonpoetlaureate@gmail.com](mailto:arlingtonpoetlaureate@gmail.com) as one e-mail attachment no later than May 25, 2015, or to the Board of Selectman at Arlington Town Hall, 730 Massachusetts Avenue, Arlington MA 02476, or hand delivered to the Board of Selectmen's Office in Town Hall.

## **ABOUT THE POET LAUREATE POSITION**

### *Purpose of the Position*

The Town of Arlington Poet Laureate is the Town's leading poetic voice and an ambassador for poetry, encouraging the reading and writing of poetry across the Town, advancing the literary arts, enriching the community, and recognizing the literary achievements of Town residents. The Poet Laureate engages a variety of town constituencies, enriching the lives of residents by many means, perhaps including sharing and promoting poetry through conversation, readings, public appearances, workshops and digital and social media.

### *Compensation*

This is an honorary, voluntary position. However, the Poet Laureate may receive honoraria and be the beneficiary of grants.

### *Term of Service*

The Poet Laureate's term of service is one year with the possibility for renewal for up to two more years.

### *Expectations of the Position*

The Poet Laureate is expected to:

- Contribute to the growth of poetry throughout the town.
- Act as the ambassador for poetry in the town.
- Present of original works of poetry.
- May conduct readings and participate in public events in town, public school and library programs as appropriate and practicable.

### *Who May Apply*

- The Town of Arlington Poet Laureate Committee embraces the diversity of human experience and identity. All applications are welcome, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, cultural heritage, socio-economic background, or physical ability. The applicant must be at least 18 years of age. The applicant must reside in Arlington. Must be available to fulfill the duties of the position as defined by Article 13 of the 2014 Town Meeting:  
<http://arlingtonma.gov/home/showdocument?id=19999> (see Appendix for the text of the Article).

## **APPLICATION GUIDELINES**

### *Criteria for Applicants and Nominations*

- The applicant should show evidence of achievement in the art of poetry, including publications (books, literary magazines, and/or digital media).
- Additional weight will be given to applicants who have received recognition or awards.
- The applicant should demonstrate excellence in promoting awareness or enjoyment of poetry.
- The applicant must be able and available to reach town-wide audiences.

### *Application/Nomination Requirements*

The following items are required as part of the application:

- 1 A one-page cover letter that includes contact information for the

applicant.

- 2 A work sample not to exceed six (6) pages, 8 ½ x 11, no less than a 12-point font, no more than one poem on each page. The work sample may contain information that indicates where the poem has been published or performed, or if it has received any awards for merit.
- 3 The applicant's résumé or curriculum vitae not to exceed two (2) pages.
- 4 Suggestions of what the applicant would hope to accomplish during his or her tenure as Poet Laureate, (up to two pages).
- 5 (Optional) Up to two (2) pages of supplementary materials, including excerpts from published book reviews, judges' comments, or other critical writings that help contextualize the poet's work for the committee.

Completed application packets should be saved either as a single .pdf file and submitted via e-mail to the Town of Arlington Poet Laureate Committee at [arlingtonpoetlaureate@gmail.com](mailto:arlingtonpoetlaureate@gmail.com), or as hard copy, mailed to the Town Manager's Office, 730 Massachusetts Avenue Arlington MA 02476, postmarked by May 26, 2015, or delivered by hand by 4 pm on that day. In order to be considered, application packets must be received by midnight on Tuesday, May 26, 2015.

### *Selection Process*

- 1 The Committee reviews all submitted materials to arrive at three (3) finalists.
- 2 The three (3) finalists are interviewed in person by the Committee.
- 3 The Committee presents their top candidate, based on the application packets and the interviews, to the Board of Selectmen.
- 4 The Committee will acknowledge the other finalists as Commended Poets.

### *Recognition of the Poet Laureate*

Every effort will be made to feature the Poet Laureate in Arlington media.

*Timeline for Applications and Selection of the Poet Laureate*

May 12: Announcement of Call for Applications

May 15: Application window opens

June 8: Deadline for applications to be received

After June 8: Poet Laureate Committee meets to select three (3) finalists

June 2015: Finalist Interviews; new Poet Laureate is recommended to Board of Selectmen

July 2015: Announcement of Arlington's new Poet Laureate.

Application questions should be addressed to the Arlington Poet Laureate Committee at [arlingtonpoetlaureate@gmail.com](mailto:arlingtonpoetlaureate@gmail.com).

## Appendix

### ARTICLE 13

#### BYLAW AMENDMENT/POET LAUREATE

VOTED: That Title II of the Town Bylaws be and hereby is amended by inserting a new article to provide for the honorary position of the Poet Laureate of the Town of Arlington as follows:

#### ARTICLE 11: POET LAUREATE OF ARLINGTON

##### Section 1. Establishment of an Honorary Poet Laureate of Arlington

There is hereby established for the purposes of advancing the literary arts, enriching the community, and recognizing the literary achievements of Town residents, the honorary position of Poet Laureate of Arlington.

##### Section 2. Selection, Term, and Criteria

Appointment of a Poet Laureate shall be for a term of one year, annually renewable for a total of three years based on the recommendation of a screening committee of five persons consisting of one person each designated by:

(a)

The Library Board of Trustees (by majority vote)

(b)

The Arlington School Committee (by majority vote)

(c)

The Arlington Commission on Arts and Culture (by majority vote)

(d)

Town Meeting Member (appointed by the Town Moderator)

(e)

The Town Manager (with advice and consent of the Board of Selectmen);

and confirmed by the Board of Selectmen.

This honorary position shall be voluntary. Only Arlington residents shall be considered for appointment, and any person appointed as Poet Laureate of Arlington must at all times remain an Arlington resident during their term as Poet Laureate. In the event that a Poet Laureate is no longer a resident of Arlington during their term, the honorary position shall be construed to have been constructively vacated.

##### Section 3. Duties of the Poet Laureate

The duties of the Poet Laureate shall be to present original works of poetry, conduct readings and participate in public events and Town, public school and library programs as appropriate and practicable.

